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The Last Chronicle of Barset

BY

ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

With Illustrations by G.H Thomas

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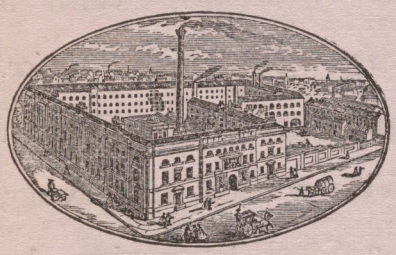

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CHAPTER IX.

GRACE CRAWLEY GOES TO ALLINGTON.

THE tidings of what had been done by the magistrates at their petty sessions was communicated the same night to Grace Crawley by Miss Prettyman. Miss Anne Prettyman had heard the news within five minutes of the execution of the bail-bond, and had rushed to her sister with information as to the event. "They have found him guilty; they have, indeed. They have convicted him,—or whatever it is, because he couldn't say where he got it." "You do not mean that they have sent him to prison?" "No;—not to prison; not as yet, that is. I don't understand it altogether; but he's to be tried again at the assizes. In the meantime he's to be out on bail. Major Grantly is to be the bail,—he and Mr. Robarts. That, I think, was very nice of him." It was undoubtedly the fact that Miss Anne Prettyman had received an accession of pleasurable emotion when she learned that Mr. Crawley had not been sent away scathless, but had been condemned, as it were, to a public trial at the assizes. And yet she would have done anything in her power to save Grace Crawley, or even to save her father. And it must be explained that Miss Anne Prettyman was supposed to be specially efficient in teaching Roman history to her pupils, although she was so manifestly ignorant of the course of law in the country in which she lived. "Committed him," said Miss Prettyman, correcting her sister with scorn. "They have not convicted him. Had they convicted him, there could be no question of bail." "I don't know how all that is, Annabella, but at any rate Major Grantly is to be the bails-

man, and there is to be another trial at Barchester." "There cannot be more than one trial in a criminal case," said Miss Prettyman, "unless the jury should disagree, or something of that kind. I suppose he has been committed, and that the trial will take place at the assizes." "Exactly,—that's just it." Had Lord Lufton appeared as lictor, and had Thompson carried the fasces, Miss Anne would have known more about it.

The sad tidings were not told to Grace till the evening. Mrs. Crawley, when the inquiry was over before the magistrates, would fain have had herself driven to the Miss Prettyman's school, that she might see her daughter; but she felt that to be impossible while her husband was in her charge. The father would of course have gone to his child, had the visit been suggested to him; but that would have caused another terrible scene; and the mother, considering it all in her mind, thought it better to abstain. Miss Prettyman did her best to make poor Grace think that the affair had gone so far favourably,—did her best, that is, without saying anything which her conscience told her to be false. "It is to be settled at the assizes in April," she said.

"And in the meantime what will become of papa?"

"Your papa will be at home, just as usual. He must have some one to advise him. I dare say it would have been all over now if he would have employed an attorney."

"But it seems so hard that an attorney should be wanted."

"My dear Grace, things in this world are hard."

"But they are always harder for papa and mamma than for anybody else." In answer to this, Miss Prettyman made some remarks intended to be wise and kind at the same time. Grace, whose eyes were laden with tears, made no immediate reply to this, but reverted to her former statement, that she must go home. "I cannot remain, Miss Prettyman; I am so unhappy."

"Will you be more happy at home?"

"I can bear it better there."

The poor girl soon learned from the intended consolations of those around her, from the ill-considered kindnesses of the pupils, and from words which fell from the servants, that her father had in fact been judged to be guilty, as far as judgment had as yet gone. "They do say, miss, it's only because he hadn't a lawyer," said the housekeeper. And if men so kind as Lord Lufton and Mr. Walker had made him out to be guilty, what could be expected from a stern judge down from London, who would know nothing about her poor father and his peculiarities, and from twelve jurymen who would be shopkeepers out

of Barchester. It would kill her father, and then it would kill her mother; and after that it would kill her also. And there was no money in the house at home. She knew it well. She had been paid three pounds a month for her services at the school, and the money for the last two months had been sent to her mother. Yet, badly as she wanted anything that she might be able to earn, she knew that she could not go on teaching. It had come to be acknowledged by both the Miss Prettymans that any teaching on her part for the present was impossible. She would go home and perish with the rest of them. There was no room left for hope to her, or to any of her family. They had accused her father of being a common thief,—her father whom she knew to be so nobly honest, her father whom she believed to be among the most devoted of God's servants. He was accused of a paltry theft, and the magistrates and lawyers and policemen among them had decided that the accusation was true! How could she look the girls in the face after that, or attempt to hold her own among the teachers!

On the next morning there came the letter from Miss Lily Dale, and with that in her hand she again went to Miss Prettyman. She must go home, she said. She must at any rate see her mother. Could Miss Prettyman be kind enough to send her home. "I haven't sixpence to pay for anything," she said, bursting out into tears; "and I haven't a right to ask for it." Then the statements which Miss Prettyman made in her eagerness to cover this latter misfortune were decidedly false. There was so much money owing to Grace, she said; money for this, money for that, money for anything or nothing! Ten pounds would hardly clear the account. "Nobody owes me anything; but if you'll lend me five shillings!" said Grace, in her agony. Miss Prettyman, as she made her way through this difficulty, thought of Major Grantly and his love. It would have been of no use, she knew. Had she brought them together on that Monday, Grace would have said nothing to him. Indeed such a meeting at such a time would have been improper. But, regarding Major Grantly, as she did, in the light of a millionaire,—for the wealth of the archdeacon was notorious,—she could not but think it a pity that poor Grace should be begging for five shillings. "You need not at any rate trouble yourself about money, Grace," said Miss Prettyman. "What is a pound or two more or less between you and me? It is almost unkind of you to think about it. Is that letter in your hand anything for me to see, my dear?" Then Grace explained that she did not wish to show Miss Dale's letter, but that Miss Dale had asked her to go to Allington. "And you will go," said Miss Prettyman. "It will be the best thing for you, and the best thing for your mother."

It was at last decided that Grace should go to her friend at Allington, and to Allington she went. She returned home for a day or two, and was persuaded by her mother to accept the invitation that had been given her. At Hogglestock, while she was there, new troubles came up, of which something shall shortly be told; but they were troubles in which Grace could give no assistance to her mother, and which, indeed, though they were in truth troubles, as will be seen, were so far beneficent that they stirred her father up to a certain action which was in itself salutary. "I think it will be better that you should be away, dearest," said the mother, who now, for the first time, heard plainly all that poor Grace had to tell about Major Grantly;—Grace having, heretofore, barely spoken, in most ambiguous words, of Major Grantly as a gentleman whom she had met at Framley, and whom she had described as being "very nice."

In old days, long ago, Lucy Robarts, the present Lady Lufton, sister of the Rev. Mark Robarts, the parson of Framley, had sojourned for a while under Mr. Crawley's roof at Hogglestock. Peculiar circumstances, which need not, perhaps, be told here, had given occasion for this visit. She had then resolved,—for her future destiny had been known to her before she left Mrs. Crawley's house,—that she would in coming days do much to befriend the family of her friend; but the doing of much had been very difficult. And the doing of anything had come to be very difficult through a certain indiscretion on Lord Lufton's part. Lord Lufton had offered assistance, pecuniary assistance, to Mr. Crawley, which Mr. Crawley had rejected with outspoken anger. What was Lord Lufton to him that his lordship should dare to come to him with his paltry money in his hand? But after a while, Lady Lufton, exercising some cunning in the operations of her friendship, had persuaded her sister-in-law at the Framley parsonage to have Grace Crawley over there as a visitor,—and there she had been during the summer holidays previous to the commencement of our story. And there, at Framley, she had become acquainted with Major Grantly, who was staying with Lord Lufton at Framley Court. She had then said something to her mother about Major Grantly, something ambiguous, something about his being "very nice," and the mother had thought how great was the pity that her daughter, who was "nice" too in her estimation, should have so few of those adjuncts to assist her which come from full pockets. She had thought no more about it then; but now she felt herself constrained to think more. "I don't quite understand why he should have come to Miss Prettyman on Monday," said Grace, "because he hardly knows her at all."

"I suppose it was on business," said Mrs. Crawley.

"No, mamma, it was not on business."

"How can you tell, dear?"

"Because Miss Prettyman said it was,—it was—to ask after me. Oh, mamma, I must tell you. I know he did like me."

"Did he ever say so to you, dearest?"

"Yes, mamma."

"And what did you tell him?"

"I told him nothing, mamma."

"And did he ask to see you on Monday?"

"No, mamma; I don't think he did. I think he understood it all too well, for I could not have spoken to him then."

Mrs. Crawley pursued the cross-examination no further, but made up her mind that it would be better that her girl should be away from her wretched home during this period of her life. If it were written in the book of fate that one of her children should be exempted from the series of misfortunes which seemed to fall, one after another, almost as a matter of course, upon her husband, upon her, and upon her family; if so great good fortune were in store for her Grace as such a marriage as this which seemed to be so nearly offered to her, it might probably be well that Grace should be as little at home as possible. Mrs. Crawley had heard nothing but good of Major Grantly; but she knew that the Grantlys were proud rich people,—who lived with their heads high up in the county,—and it could hardly be that a son of the archdeacon would like to take his bride direct from Hogglestock parsonage.

It was settled that Grace should go to Allington as soon as a letter could be received from Miss Dale in return to Grace's note, and on the third morning after her arrival at home she started. None but they who have themselves been poor gentry,—gentry so poor as not to know how to raise a shilling,—can understand the peculiar bitterness of the trials which such poverty produces. The poverty of the normal poor does not approach it; or, rather, the pangs arising from such poverty are altogether of a different sort. To be hungry and have no food, to be cold and have no fuel, to be threatened with distraint for one's few chairs and tables, and with the loss of the roof over one's head,—all these miseries, which, if they do not positively reach, are so frequently near to reaching the normal poor, are, no doubt, the severest of the trials to which humanity is subjected. They threaten life,—or, if not life, then liberty,—reducing the abject one to a choice between captivity and starvation. By hook or crook, the poor gentleman or poor lady,—

let the one or the other be ever so poor,—does not often come to the last extremity of the workhouse. There are such cases, but they are exceptional. Mrs. Crawley, through all her sufferings, had never yet found her cupboard to be absolutely bare, or the bread-pan to be actually empty. But there are pangs to which, at the time, starvation itself would seem to be preferable. The angry eyes of unpaid tradesmen, savage with an anger which one knows to be justifiable; the taunt of the poor servant who wants her wages; the gradual relinquishment of habits which the soft nurture of earlier, kinder years had made second nature; the wan cheeks of the wife whose malady demands wine; the rags of the husband whose outward occupations demand decency; the neglected children, who are learning not to be the children of gentlefolk; and, worse than all, the alms and doles of half-generous friends, the waning pride, the pride that will not wane, the growing doubt whether it be not better to bow the head, and acknowledge to all the world that nothing of the pride of station is left,—that the hand is open to receive and ready to touch the cap, that the fall from the upper to the lower level has been accomplished,—these are the pangs of poverty which drive the Crawleys of the world to the frequent entertaining of that idea of the bare bodkin. It was settled that Grace should go to Allington;—but how about her clothes? And then, whence was to come the price of her journey?

"I don't think they'll mind about my being shabby at Allington. They live very quietly there."

"But you say that Miss Dale is so very nice in all her ways."

"Lily is very nice, mamma; but I shan't mind her so much as her mother, because she knows it all. I have told her everything."

"But you have given me all your money, dearest."

"Miss Prettyman told me I was to come to her," said Grace, who had already taken some small sum from the schoolmistress, which at once had gone into her mother's pocket, and into household purposes. "She said I should be sure to go to Allington, and that of course I should go to her, as I must pass through Silverbridge."

"I hope papa will not ask about it," said Mrs. Crawley. Luckily papa did not ask about it, being at the moment occupied much with other thoughts and other troubles, and Grace was allowed to return by Silverbridge, and to take what was needed from Miss Prettyman. Who can tell of the mending and patching, of the weary wearing midnight hours of needlework which were accomplished before the poor girl went, so that she might not reach her friend's house in actual rags? And when the work was ended, what was there to show for it? I do not

think that the idea of the bare bodkin, as regarded herself, ever flitted across Mrs. Crawley's brain,—she being one of those who are very strong to endure; but it must have occurred to her very often that the repose of the grave is sweet, and that there cometh after death a levelling and making even of things, which would at last cure all her evils.

Grace no doubt looked forward to a levelling and making even of things,—or perhaps even to something more prosperous than that, which should come to her relief on this side of the grave. She could not but have high hopes in regard to her future destiny. Although, as has been said, she understood no more than she ought to have understood from Miss Prettyman's account of the conversation with Major Grantly, still, innocent as she was, she had understood much. She knew that the man loved her, and she knew also that she loved the man. She thoroughly comprehended that the present could be to her no time for listening to speeches of love, or for giving kind answers; but still I think that she did look for relief on this side of the grave.

"Tut, tut," said Miss Prettyman as Grace in vain tried to conceal her tears up in the private sanctum. "You ought to know me by this time, and to have learned that I can understand things." The tears had flown in return not only for the five gold sovereigns which Miss Prettyman had pressed into her hand, but on account of the prettiest, soft, grey merino frock that ever charmed a girl's eye. "I should like to know how many girls I have given dresses to, when they have been going out visiting. Law, my dear; they take them, many of them, from us old maids, almost as if we were only paying our debts in giving them." And then Miss Anne gave her a cloth cloak, very warm, with pretty buttons and gimp trimmings,—just such a cloak as any girl might like to wear who thought that she would be seen out walking by her Major Grantly on a Christmas morning. Grace Crawley did not expect to be seen out walking by her Major Grantly, but nevertheless she liked the cloak. By the power of her practical will, and by her true sympathy, the elder Miss Prettyman had for a while conquered the annoyance which, on Grace's part, was attached to the receiving of gifts, by the consciousness of her poverty; and when Miss Anne, with some pride in the tone of her voice, expressed a hope that Grace would think the cloak pretty, Grace put her arms pleasantly round her friend's neck, and declared that it was very pretty,—the prettiest cloak in all the world!

Grace was met at the Guestwick railway-station by her friend Lilian Dale, and was driven over to Allington in a pony carriage

belonging to Lilian's uncle, the squire of the parish. I think she will be excused in having put on her new cloak, not so much because of the cold as with a view of making the best of herself before Mrs. Dale. And yet she knew that Mrs. Dale would know all the circumstances of her poverty, and was very glad that it should be so. "I am so glad that you have come, dear," said Lily. "It will be such a comfort."

"I am sure you are very good," said Grace.

"And mamma is so glad. From the moment that we both talked ourselves into eagerness about it,—while I was writing my letter, you know, we resolved that it must be so."

"I'm afraid I shall be a great trouble to Mrs. Dale."

"A trouble to mamma! Indeed you will not. You shall be a trouble to no one but me. I will have all the trouble myself, and the labour I delight in shall physic my pain."

Grace Crawley could not during the journey be at home and at ease even with her friend Lily. She was going to a strange house under strange circumstances. Her father had not indeed been tried and found guilty of theft, but the charge of theft had been made against him, and the magistrates before whom it had been made had thought that the charge was true. Grace knew that all the local newspapers had told the story, and was of course aware that Mrs. Dale would have heard it. Her own mind was full of it, and though she dreaded to speak of it, yet she could not be silent. Miss Dale, who understood much of this, endeavoured to talk her friend into easiness; but she feared to begin upon the one subject, and before the drive was over they were, both of them, too cold for much conversation. "There's mamma," said Miss Dale as they drove up, turning out of the street of the village to the door of Mrs. Dale's house. "She always knows, by instinct, when I am coming. You must understand now that you are among us, that mamma and I are not mother and daughter, but two loving old ladies, living together in peace and harmony. We do have our quarrels,—whether the chicken shall be roast or boiled, but never anything beyond that. Mamma, here is Grace, starved to death; and she says if you don't give her some tea she will go back at once."

"I will give her some tea," said Mrs. Dale.

"And I am worse than she is, because I've been driving. It's all up with Bertram and Mr. Green for the next week at least. It is freezing as hard as it can freeze, and they might as well try to hunt in Lapland as here."

"They'll console themselves with skating," said Mrs. Dale.

"Have you ever observed, Grace," said Miss Dale, "how much

amusement gentlemen require, and how imperative it is that some other game should be provided when one game fails ?"

"Not particularly," said Grace.

"Oh, but it is so. Now, with women, it is supposed that they can amuse themselves or live without amusement. Once or twice in a year, perhaps something is done for them. There is an arrow-shooting party, or a ball, or a picnic. But the catering for men's sport is never-ending, and is always paramount to everything else. And yet the pet game of the day never goes off properly. In partridge time, the partridges are wild, and won't come to be killed. In hunting time the foxes won't run straight,—the wretches. They show no spirit, and will take to ground to save their brushes. Then comes a nipping frost, and skating is proclaimed; but the ice is always rough, and the woodcocks have deserted the country. And as for salmon,—when the summer comes round I do really believe that they suffer a great deal about the salmon. I'm sure they never catch any. So they go back to their clubs and their cards, and their billiards, and abuse their cooks and blackball their friends. That's about it, mamma; is it not ?"

"You know more about it than I do, my dear."

"Because I have to listen to Bertram, as you never will do. We've got such a Mr. Green down here, Grace. He's such a duck of a man,—such top-boots and all the rest of it. And yet they whisper to me that he doesn't ride always to hounds. And to see him play billiards is beautiful, only he never can make a stroke. I hope you play billiards, Grace, because uncle Christopher has just had a new table put up."

"I never saw a billiard-table yet," said Grace.

"Then Mr. Green shall teach you. He'll do anything that you ask him. If you don't approve the colour of the ball, he'll go to London to get you another one. Only you must be very careful about saying that you like anything before him, as he'll be sure to have it for you the next day. Mamma happened to say that she wanted a four-penny postage-stamp, and he walked off to Guestwick to get it for her instantly, although it was lunch-time."

"He did nothing of the kind, Lily," said her mother. "He was going to Guestwick, and was very good-natured, and brought me back a postage-stamp that I wanted."

"Of course he's good-natured, I know that. And there's my cousin Bertram. He's Captain Dale, you know. But he prefers to be called Mr. Dale, because he has left the army, and has set up as junior squire of the parish. Uncle Christopher is the real squire; only

Bertram does all the work. And now you know all about us. I'm afraid you'll find us dull enough,—unless you can take a fancy to Mr. Green."

"Does Mr. Green live here?" asked Grace.

"No; he does not live here. I never heard of his living anywhere. He was something once, but I don't know what; and I don't think he's anything now in particular. But he's Bertram's friend, and like most men, as one sees them, he never has much to do. Does Major Grantly ever go forth to fight his country's battles?" This last question she asked in a low whisper, so that the words did not reach her mother. Grace blushed up to her eyes, however, as she answered,—

"I think that Major Grantly has left the army."

"We shall get her round in a day or two, mamma," said Lily Dale to her mother that night. "I'm sure it will be the best thing to force her to talk of her troubles."

"I would not use too much force, my dear."

"Things are better when they're talked about. I'm sure they are. And it will be good to make her accustomed to speak of Major Grantly. From what Mary Walker tells me, he certainly means it. And if so, she should be ready for it when it comes."

"Do not make her ready for what may never come."

"No, mamma; but she is at present such a child that she knows nothing of her own powers. She should be made to understand that it is possible that even a Major Grantly may think himself fortunate in being allowed to love her."

"I should leave all that to Nature, if I were you," said Mrs. Dale.

CHAPTER X.

DINNER AT FRAMLEY COURT.

Lord Lufton, as he drove home to Framley after the meeting of the magistrates at Silverbridge, discussed the matter with his brother-in-law, Mark Robarts, the clergyman. Lord Lufton was driving a dog-cart, and went along the road at the rate of twelve miles an hour. "I'll tell you what it is, Mark," he said, "that man is innocent; but if he won't employ lawyers at his trial, the jury will find him guilty."

"I don't know what to think about it," said the clergyman.

"Were you in the room when he protested so vehemently that he didn't know where he got the money?"

"I was in the room all the time."

"And did you not believe him when he said that?"

"Yes,—I think I did."

"Anybody must have believed him,—except old Tempest, who never believes anybody, and Fothergill, who always suspects everybody. The truth is, that he had found the cheque and put it by, and did not remember anything about it."

"But, Lufton, surely that would amount to stealing it."

"Yes, if it wasn't that he is such a poor, cracked, crazy creature, with his mind all abroad. I think Soames did drop his book in his house. I'm sure Soames would not say so unless he was quite confident. Somebody has picked it up, and in some way the cheque has got into Crawley's hand. Then he has locked it up and has forgotten all about it; and when that butcher threatened him, he has put his hand upon it, and he has thought, or believed, that it had come from Soames or from the dean, or from heaven, if you will. When a man is so crazy as that, you can't judge of him as you do of others."

"But a jury must judge of him as it would of others."

"And therefore there should be a lawyer to tell the jury what to do. They should have somebody up out of the parish to show that he is beside himself half his time. His wife would be the best person, only it would be hard lines on her."

"Very hard. And after all he would only escape by being shown to be mad."

"And he is mad."

"Mrs. Proudie would come upon him in such a case as that, and sequester his living."

"And what will Mrs. Proudie do when he's a convicted thief? Simply unfrock him, and take away his living altogether. Nothing on earth should induce me to find him guilty if I were on a jury."

"But you have committed him."

"Yes,—I've been one, at least, in doing so. I simply did that which Walker told us we must do. A magistrate is not left to himself as a juryman is. I'd eat the biggest pair of boots in Barchester before I found him guilty. I say, Mark, you must talk it over with the women, and see what can be done for them. Lucy tells me that they're so poor, that if they have bread to eat, it's as much as they have."

On this evening Archdeacon Grantly and his wife dined and slept at Framley Court, there having been a very long family friendship between

old Lady Lufton and the Grantlys, and Dr. Thorne with his wife, from Chaldicotes, also dined at Framley. There was also there another clergyman from Barchester, Mr. Champion, one of the prebends of the cathedral. There were only three now who had houses in the city since the retrenchments of the ecclesiastical commission had come into full force. And this Mr. Champion was dear to the Dowager Lady Lufton, because he carried on worthily the clerical war against the bishop which had raged in Barsetshire ever since Dr. Proudie had come there,—which war old Lady Lufton, good and pious and charitable as she was, considered that she was bound to keep up, even to the knife, till Dr. Proudie and all his satellites should have been banished into outer darkness. As the light of the Proudies still shone brightly, it was probable that poor old Lady Lufton might die before her battle was accomplished. She often said that it would be so, but when so saying, always expressed a wish that the fight might be carried on after her death. "I shall never, never rest in my grave," she had once said to the archdeacon, "while that woman sits in your father's palace." For the archdeacon's father had been Bishop of Barchester before Dr. Proudie. What mode of getting rid of the bishop or his wife Lady Lufton proposed to herself, I am unable to say; but I think she lived in hopes that in some way it might be done. If only the bishop could have been found to have stolen a cheque for twenty pounds instead of poor Mr. Crawley, Lady Lufton would, I think, have been satisfied.

In the course of these battles Framley Court would sometimes assume a clerical aspect,—have a prevailing hue, as it were, of black coats, which was not altogether to the taste of Lord Lufton, and as to which he would make complaint to his wife, and to Mark Robarts, himself a clergyman. "There's more of this than I can stand," he'd say to the latter. "There's a deuced deal more of it than you like yourself, I know."

"It's not for me to like or dislike. It's a great thing having your mother in the parish."

"That's all very well; and of course she'll do as she likes. She may ask whom she pleases here, and I shan't interfere. It's the same as though it was her own house. But I shall take Lucy to Lufton." Now Lord Lufton had been building his house at Lufton for the last seven years, and it was not yet finished,—or nearly finished, if all that his wife and mother said was true. And if they could have their way, it never would be finished. And so, in order that Lord Lufton might not be actually driven away by the turmoils of ecclesiastical contest, the younger Lady Lufton would endeavour to moderate both the wrath

and the zeal of the elder one, and would struggle against the coming clergymen. On this day, however, three sat at the board at Framley, and Lady Lufton, in her justification to her son, swore that the invitation had been given by her daughter-in-law. "You know, my dear," the dowager said to Lord Lufton, "something must be done for these poor Crawleys; and as the dean is away, Lucy wants to speak to the archdeacon about them."

"And the archdeacon could not subscribe his ten-pound note without having Mr. Champion to back him?"

"My dear Ludovic, you do put it in such a way."

"Never mind, mother. I've no special dislike to Champion; only as you are not paid five thousand a year for your trouble, it is rather hard that you should have to do all the work of opposition bishop in the diocese."

It was felt by them all,—including Lord Lufton himself, who became so interested in the matter as to forgive the black coats before the evening was over,—that this matter of Mr. Crawley's committal was very serious, and demanded the full energies of their party. It was known to them all that the feeling at the palace was inimical to Mr. Crawley. "That she-Beelzebub hates him for his poverty, and because Arabin brought him into the diocese," said the archdeacon, permitting himself to use very strong language in his allusion to the bishop's wife. It must be recorded on his behalf that he used the phrase in the presence only of the gentlemen of the party. I think he might have whispered the word into the ear of his confidential friend old Lady Lufton, and perhaps have given no offence; but he would not have ventured to use such words aloud in the presence of ladies.

"You forget, archdeacon," said Dr. Thorne, laughing, "that the she-Beelzebub is my wife's particular friend."

"Not a bit of it," said the archdeacon. "Your wife knows better than that. You tell her what I call her, and if she complains of the name, I'll unsay it." It may therefore be supposed that Dr. Thorne, and Mrs. Thorne, and the archdeacon, knew each other intimately, and understood each other's feelings on these matters.

It was quite true that the palace party was inimical to Mr. Crawley. Mr. Crawley undoubtedly was poor, and had not been so submissive to episcopal authority as it behoves any clergyman to be whose loaves and fishes are scanty. He had raised his back more than once against orders emanating from the palace in a manner that had made the hairs on the head of the bishop's wife to stand almost on end, and had taken as much upon himself as though his living had been worth twelve

hundred a year. Mrs. Proudie, almost as energetic in her language as the archdeacon, had called him a beggarly perpetual curate. "We must have perpetual curates, my dear," the bishop had said. "They should know their places then. But what can you expect of a creature from the deanery? All that ought to be altered. The dean should have no patronage in the diocese. No dean should have any patronage. It is an abuse from the beginning to the end. Dean Arabin, if he had any conscience, would be doing the duty at Hogglestock himself." How the bishop strove to teach his wife, with mildest words, what really ought to be a dean's duty, and how the wife rejoined by teaching her husband, not in the mildest words, what ought to be a bishop's duty, we will not further inquire here. The fact that such dialogues took place at the palace is recorded simply to show that the palatial feeling in Barchester ran counter to Mr. Crawley.

And this was cause enough, if no other cause existed, for partiality to Mr. Crawley at Framley Court. But, as has been partly explained, there existed, if possible, even stronger ground than this for adherence to the Crawley cause. The younger Lady Lufton had known the Crawleys intimately, and the elder Lady Lufton had reckoned them among the neighbouring clerical families of her acquaintance. Both these ladies were therefore staunch in their defence of Mr. Crawley. The archdeacon himself had his own reasons,—reasons which for the present he kept altogether within his own bosom,—for wishing that Mr. Crawley had never entered the diocese. Whether the perpetual curate should or should not be declared to be a thief, it would be terrible to him to have to call the child of that perpetual curate his daughter-in-law. But not the less on this occasion was he true to his order, true to his side in the diocese, true to his hatred of the palace.

"I don't believe it for a moment," he said, as he took his place on the rug before the fire in the drawing-room when the gentlemen came in from their wine. The ladies understood at once what it was that he couldn't believe. Mr. Crawley had for the moment so usurped the county that nobody thought of talking of anything else.

"How is it, then," said Mrs. Thorne, "that Lord Lufton, and my husband, and the other wiseacres at Silverbridge, have committed him for trial?"

"Because we were told to do so by the lawyer," said Dr. Thorne.

"Ladies will never understand that magistrates must act in accordance with the law," said Lord Lufton.

"But you all say he's not guilty," said Mrs. Robarts.

"The fact is, that the magistrates cannot try the question," said

the archdeacon; "they only hear the primary evidence. In this case I don't believe Crawley would ever have been committed if he had employed an attorney, instead of speaking for himself."

"Why didn't somebody make him have an attorney?" said Lady Lufton.

"I don't think any attorney in the world could have spoken for him better than he spoke for himself," said Dr. Thorne.

"And yet you committed him," said his wife. "What can we do for him? Can't we pay the bail, and send him off to America?"

"A jury will never find him guilty," said Lord Lufton.

"And what is the truth of it?" asked the younger Lady Lufton.

Then the whole matter was discussed again, and it was settled among them all that Mr. Crawley had undoubtedly appropriated the cheque through temporary obliquity of judgment,—obliquity of judgment and forgetfulness as to the source from whence the cheque had come to him. "He has picked it up about the house, and then has thought that it was his own," said Lord Lufton. Had they come to the conclusion that such an appropriation of money had been made by one of the clergy of the palace, by one of the Proudeian party, they would doubtless have been very loud and very bitter as to the iniquity of the offender. They would have said much as to the weakness of the bishop and the wickedness of the bishop's wife, and would have declared the appropriator to have been as very a thief as ever picked a pocket or opened a till;—but they were unanimous in their acquittal of Mr. Crawley. It had not been his intention, they said, to be a thief, and a man should be judged only by his intention. It must now be their object to induce a Barchester jury to look at the matter in the same light.

"When they come to understand how the land lies," said the archdeacon, "they will be all right. There's not a tradesman in the city who does not hate that woman as though she were——"

"Archdeacon," said his wife, cautioning him to repress his energy.

"Their bills are all paid by this new chaplain they've got, and he is made to claim discount on every leg of mutton," said the archdeacon. Arguing from which fact,—or from which assertion, he came to the conclusion that no Barchester jury would find Mr. Crawley guilty.

But it was agreed on all sides that it would not be well to trust to the unassisted friendship of the Barchester tradesmen. Mr. Crawley must be provided with legal assistance, and this must be furnished to him whether he should be willing or unwilling to receive it. That there would be a difficulty was acknowledged. Mr. Crawley was known to be a man not easy of persuasion, with a will of his own, with a great

energy of obstinacy on points which he chose to take up as being of importance to his calling, or to his own professional status. He had pleaded his own cause before the magistrates, and it might be that he would insist on doing the same thing before the judge. At last Mr. Robarts, the clergyman of Framley, was deputed from the knot of Crawleian advocates assembled in Lady Lufton's drawing-room, to undertake the duty of seeing Mr. Crawley, and of explaining to him that his proper defence was regarded as a matter appertaining to the clergy and gentry generally of that part of the country, and that for the sake of the clergy and gentry the defence must of course be properly conducted. In such circumstances the expense of the defence would of course be borne by the clergy and gentry concerned. It was thought that Mr. Robarts could put the matter to Mr. Crawley with such a mixture of the strength of manly friendship and the softness of clerical persuasion, as to overcome the recognized difficulties of the task.

CHAPTER XI.

THE BISHOP SENDS HIS INHIBITION.

Tidings of Mr. Crawley's fate reached the palace at Barchester on the afternoon of the day on which the magistrates had committed him. All such tidings travel very quickly, conveyed by imperceptible wires, and distributed by indefatigable message boys whom Rumour seems to supply for the purpose. Barchester is twenty miles from Silverbridge by road, and more than forty by railway. I doubt whether any one was commissioned to send the news along the actual telegraph, and yet Mrs. Proudie knew it before four o'clock. But she did not know it quite accurately. "Bishop," she said, standing at her husband's study door. "They have committed that man to gaol. There was no help for them unless they had forsworn themselves."

"Not forsworn themselves, my dear," said the bishop, striving, as was usual with him, by some meek and ineffectual word to teach his wife that she was occasionally led by her energy into error. He never persisted in the lessons when he found, as was usual, that they were taken amiss.

"I say forsworn themselves!" said Mrs. Proudie; "and now what do you mean to do? This is Thursday, and of course the man must

not be allowed to desecrate the church of Hogglestock by performing the Sunday services."

"If he has been committed, my dear, and is in prison, ——"

"I said nothing about prison, bishop."

"Gaol, my dear."

"I say they have committed him to gaol. So my informant tells me. But of course all the Plumstead and Framley set will move heaven and earth to get him out, so that he may be there as a disgrace to the diocese. I wonder how the dean will feel when he hears of it! I do, indeed. For the dean, though he is an idle, useless man, with no church principles, and no real piety, still he has a conscience. I think he has a conscience."

"I'm sure he has, my dear."

"Well;—let us hope so. And if he has a conscience, what must be his feelings when he hears that this creature whom he brought into the diocese has been committed to gaol along with common felons."

"Not with felons, my dear; at least, I should think not."

"I say with common felons! A downright robbery of twenty pounds, just as though he had broken into the bank! And so he did, with sly artifice, which is worse in such hands than a crowbar. And now what are we to do? Here is Thursday, and something must be done before Sunday for the souls of those poor benighted creatures at Hogglestock." Mrs. Proudie was ready for the battle, and was even now sniffing the blood afar-off. "I believe it's a hundred and thirty pounds a year," she said, before the bishop had collected his thoughts sufficiently for a reply.

"I think we must find out, first of all, whether he is really to be shut up in prison," said the bishop.

"And suppose he is not to be shut up. Suppose they have been weak, or untrue to their duty—and from what we know of the magistrates of Barsetshire, there is too much reason to suppose that they will have been so; suppose they have let him out, is he to go about like a roaring lion—among the souls of the people?"

The bishop shook in his shoes. When Mrs. Proudie began to talk of the souls of the people he always shook in his shoes. She had an eloquent way of raising her voice over the word souls that was qualified to make any ordinary man shake in his shoes. The bishop was a conscientious man, and well knew that poor Mr. Crawley, even though he might have become a thief under terrible temptation, would not roar at Hogglestock to the injury of any man's soul. He was aware that this poor clergyman had done his duty laboriously and efficiently, and he was also aware that though he might have been committed by the magis-

trates, and then let out upon bail, he should not be regarded now, in these days before his trial, as a convicted thief. But to explain all this to Mrs. Proudie was beyond his power. He knew well that she would not hear a word in mitigation of Mr. Crawley's presumed offence. Mr. Crawley belonged to the other party, and Mrs. Proudie was a thorough-going partisan. I know a man,—an excellent fellow, who, being himself a strong politician, constantly expresses a belief that all politicians opposed to him are thieves, child-murderers, parricides, lovers of incest, demons upon the earth. He is a strong partisan, but not, I think, so strong as Mrs. Proudie. He says that he believes all evil of his opponents; but she really believed the evil. The archdeacon had called Mrs. Proudie a she-Beelzebub; but that was a simple ebullition of mortal hatred. He believed her to be simply a vulgar, interfering, brazen-faced virago. Mrs. Proudie in truth believed that the archdeacon was an actual emanation from Satan, sent to those parts to devour souls,—as she would call it,—and that she herself was an emanation of another sort, sent from another source expressly to Barchester, to prevent such devouring, as far as it might possibly be prevented by a mortal agency. The bishop knew it all,—understood it all. He regarded the archdeacon as a clergyman belonging to a party opposed to his party, and he disliked the man. He knew that from his first coming into the diocese he had been encountered with enmity by the archdeacon and the archdeacon's friends. If left to himself he could feel and to a certain extent could resent such enmity. But he had no faith in his wife's doctrine of emanations. He had no faith in many things which she believed religiously;—and yet what could he do? If he attempted to explain, she would stop him before he had got through the first half of his first sentence.

"If he is out on bail ——," commenced the bishop.

"Of course he will be out on bail."

"Then I think he should feel ——"

"Feel! such men never feel! What feeling can one expect from a convicted thief?"

"Not convicted as yet, my dear," said the bishop.

"A convicted thief," repeated Mrs. Proudie; and she vociferated the words in such a tone that the bishop resolved that he would for the future let the word convicted pass without notice. After all she was only using the phrase in a peculiar sense given to it by herself.

"It won't be proper, certainly, that he should do the services," suggested the bishop.

"Proper! It would be a scandal to the whole diocese. How

could he raise his head as he pronounced the eighth commandment? That must be at least prevented."

The bishop, who was seated, fretted himself in his chair, moving about with little movements. He knew that there was a misery coming upon him; and, as far as he could see, it might become a great misery, —a huge blistering sore upon him. When miseries came to him, as they did not unfrequently, he would unconsciously endeavour to fathom them and weigh them, and then, with some gallantry, resolve to bear them, if he could find that their depth and weight were not too great for his powers of endurance. He would let the cold wind whistle by him, putting up the collar of his coat, and would encounter the winter weather without complaint. And he would be patient under the hot sun, knowing well that tranquillity is best for those who have to bear tropical heat. But when the storm threatened to knock him off his legs, when the earth beneath him became too hot for his poor tender feet,—what could he do then? There had been with him such periods of misery, during which he had wailed inwardly and had confessed to himself that the wife of his bosom was too much for him. Now the storm seemed to be coming very roughly. It would be demanded of him that he should exercise certain episcopal authority which he knew did not belong to him. Now, episcopal authority admits of being stretched or contracted according to the character of the bishop who uses it. It is not always easy for a bishop himself to know what he may do, and what he may not do. He may certainly give advice to any clergyman in his diocese, and he may give it in such form that it will have in it something of authority. Such advice coming from a dominant bishop to a clergyman with a submissive mind, has in it very much of authority. But Bishop Proudie knew that Mr. Crawley was not a clergyman with a submissive mind, and he feared that he himself, as regarded from Mr. Crawley's point of view, was not a dominant bishop. And yet he could only act by advice. "I will write to him," said the bishop, "and will explain to him that as he is circumstanced he should not appear in the reading desk."

"Of course he must not appear in the reading desk. That scandal must at any rate be inhibited." Now the bishop did not at all like the use of the word inhibited, understanding well that Mrs. Proudie intended it to be understood as implying some episcopal command against which there should be no appeal;—but he let it pass.

"I will write to him, my dear, to-night."

"And Mr. Thumble can go over with the letter the first thing in the morning."

"Will not the post be better?" "No, bishop; certainly not."

"He would get it sooner, if I write to-night, my dear."

"In either case he will get it to-morrow morning. An hour or two will not signify, and if Mr. Thumble takes it himself we shall know how it is received. It will be well that Thumble should be there in person as he will want to look for lodgings in the parish."

"But, my dear ——"

"Well, bishop?"

"About lodgings? I hardly think that Mr. Thumble, if we decide that Mr. Thumble shall undertake the duty ——"

"We have decided that Mr. Thumble should undertake the duty. That is decided."

"But I do not think he should trouble himself to look for lodgings at Hogglestock. He can go over on the Sundays."

"And who is to do the parish work? Would you have that man, a convicted thief, to look after the schools, and visit the sick, and perhaps attend the dying?"

"There will be a great difficulty; there will indeed," said the bishop, becoming very unhappy, and feeling that he was driven by circumstances either to assert his own knowledge or teach his wife something of the law with reference to his position as a bishop. "Who is to pay Mr. Thumble?"

"The income of the parish must be sequestrated, and he must be paid out of that. Of course he must have the income while he does the work."

"But, my dear, I cannot sequestrate the man's income."

"I don't believe it, bishop. If the bishop cannot sequestrate, who can? But you are always timid in exercising the authority put into your hands for wise purposes. Not sequestrate the income of a man who has been proved to be a thief! You leave that to us, and we will manage it." The "us" here named comprised Mrs. Proudie and the bishop's managing chaplain.

Then the bishop was left alone for an hour to write the letter which Mr. Thumble was to carry over to Mr. Crawley,—and after a while he did write it. Before he commenced the task, however, he sat for some moments in his arm-chair close by the fire-side, asking himself whether it might not be possible for him to overcome his enemy in this matter. How would it go with him suppose he were to leave the letter unwritten, and send in a message by his chaplain to Mrs. Proudie, saying that as Mr. Crawley was out on bail, the parish might be left for the present without episcopal interference? She could not make him interfere. She could not force him to write the letter. So, at least, he said to

himself. But as he said it, he almost thought that she could do these things. In the last thirty years, or more, she had ever contrived by some power latent in her to have her will effected. But what would happen if now, even now, he were to rebel? That he would personally become very uncomfortable, he was well aware, but he thought that he could bear that. The food would become bad,—mere ashes between his teeth, the daily modicum of wine would lose its flavour, the chimneys would all smoke, the wind would come from the east, and the servants would not answer the bell. Little miseries of that kind would crowd upon him. He had arrived at a time of life in which such miseries make such men very miserable; but yet he thought that he could endure them. And what other wretchedness would come to him? She would scold him,—frightfully, loudly, scornfully, and worse than all, continually. But of this he had so much habitually, that anything added might be borne also;—if only he could be sure that the scoldings should go on in private, that the world of the palace should not be allowed to hear the revilings to which he would be subjected. But to be scolded publicly was the great evil which he dreaded beyond all evils. He was well aware that the palace would know his misfortune, that it was known, and freely discussed by all, from the examining chaplain down to the palace boot-boy;—nay, that it was known to all the diocese; but yet he could smile upon those around him, and look as though he held his own like other men,—unless when open violence was displayed. But when that voice was heard aloud along the corridors of the palace, and when he was summoned imperiously by the woman, calling for her bishop, so that all Barchester heard it, and when he was compelled to creep forth from his study, at the sound of that summons, with distressed face, and shaking hands, and short hurrying steps,—a being to be pitied even by a deacon,—not venturing to assume an air of masterdom should he chance to meet a housemaid on the stairs,—then, at such moments as that, he would feel that any submission was better than the misery which he suffered. And he well knew that should he now rebel, the whole house would be in a turmoil. He would be bishoped here, and bishoped there, before the eyes of all palatial men and women, till life would be a burden to him. So he got up from his seat over the fire, and went to his desk and wrote the letter. The letter was as follows:—

"The Palace, Barchester, —— December, 186—.

"Reverend Sir,—(he left out the dear, because he knew that if he inserted it he would be compelled to write the letter over again.)

"I have heard to-day with the greatest trouble of spirit, that you have been taken before a bench of magistrates assembled at Silverbridge, having been previously arrested by the police in your parsonage house at Hogglestock, and that the magistrates of Silverbridge have committed you to take your trial at the next assizes at Barchester, on a charge of theft.

"Far be it from me to prejudge the case. You will understand, reverend sir, that I express no opinion whatever as to your guilt or innocence in this matter. If you have been guilty, may the Lord give you grace to repent of your great sin and to make such amends as may come from immediate acknowledgment and confession. If you are innocent, may He protect you, and make your innocence to shine before all men. In either case may the Lord be with you and keep your feet from further stumbling.

"But I write to you now as your bishop, to explain to you that circumstanced as you are, you cannot with decency perform the church services of your parish. I have that confidence in you that I doubt not you will agree with me in this, and will be grateful to me for relieving you so far from the immediate perplexities of your position. I have, therefore, appointed the Rev. Caleb Thumble to perform the duties of incumbent of Hogglestock till such time as a jury shall have decided upon your case at Barchester; and in order that you may at once become acquainted with Mr. Thumble, as will be most convenient that you should do, I will commission him to deliver this letter into your hand personally to-morrow, trusting that you will receive him with that brotherly spirit in which he is sent upon this painful mission.

"Touching the remuneration to which Mr. Thumble will become entitled for his temporary ministrations in the parish of Hogglestock, I do not at present lay down any strict injunction. He must, at any rate, be paid at a rate not less than that ordinarily afforded for a curate.

"I will once again express my fervent hope that the Lord may bring you to see the true state of your own soul, and that he may fill you with the grace of repentance, so that the bitter waters of the present hour may not pass over your head and destroy you.

"I have the honour to be,

"Reverend Sir,

"Your faithful servant in Christ,

"T. Barnum."*

* Baronum Castrum having been the old Roman name from which the modern Barchester is derived, the bishops of the diocese have always signed themselves Barnum.

The bishop had hardly finished his letter when Mrs. Proudie returned to the study, followed by the Rev. Caleb Thumble. Mr. Thumble was a little man, about forty years of age, who had a wife and children living in Barchester, and who existed on such chance clerical crumbs as might fall from the table of the bishop's patronage. People in Barchester said that Mrs. Thumble was a cousin of Mrs. Proudie's; but as Mrs. Proudie stoutly denied the connection, it may be supposed that the people of Barchester were wrong. And, had Mr. Thumble's wife in truth been a cousin, Mrs. Proudie would surely have provided for him during the many years in which the diocese had been in her hands. No such provision had been made, and Mr. Thumble, who had now been living in the diocese for three years, had received nothing else from the bishop than such chance employment as this which he was now to undertake at Hogglestock. He was a humble, mild-voiced man, when within the palace precincts, and had so far succeeded in making his way among his brethen in the cathedral city as to be employed not unfrequently for absent minor canons in chanting the week-day services, being remunerated for his work at the rate of about two shillings and sixpence a service.

The bishop handed his letter to his wife, observing in an off-hand kind of way that she might as well see what he said. "Of course I shall read it," said Mrs. Proudie. And the bishop winced visibly, because Mr. Thumble was present. "Quite right," said Mrs. Proudie, "quite right to let him know that you knew that he had been arrested, —actually arrested by the police."

"I thought it proper to mention that, because of the scandal," said the bishop.

"Oh, it has been terrible in the city," said Mr. Thumble.

"Never mind, Mr. Thumble," said Mrs. Proudie. "Never mind that at present." Then she continued to read the letter. "What's this? Confession! That must come out, bishop. It will never do that you should recommend confession to anybody, under any circumstances."

"But, my dear——"

"It must come out, bishop."

"My lord has not meant auricular confession," suggested Mr. Thumble. Then Mrs. Proudie turned round and looked at Mr. Thumble, and Mr. Thumble nearly sank amidst the tables and chairs. "I beg your pardon, Mrs. Proudie," he said. "I didn't mean to intrude."

"The word must come out, bishop," repeated Mrs. Proudie. "There

should be no stumbling-blocks prepared for feet that are only too ready to fall." And the word did come out.

"Now, Mr. Thumble," said the lady, as she gave the letter to her satellite, "the bishop and I wish you to be at Hogglestock early to-morrow. You should be there not later than ten, certainly." Then she paused until Mr. Thumble had given the required promise. "And we request that you will be very firm in the mission which is confided to you, a mission which, as of course you see, is of a very delicate and important nature. You must be firm."

"I will endeavour," said Mr. Thumble.

"The bishop and I both feel that this most unfortunate man must not under any circumstances be allowed to perform the services of the Church while this charge is hanging over him,—a charge as to the truth of which no sane man can entertain a doubt."

"I'm afraid not, Mrs. Proudie," said Mr. Thumble.

"The bishop and I therefore are most anxious that you should make Mr. Crawley understand at once,—at once," and the lady, as she spoke, lifted up her left hand with an eloquent violence which had its effect upon Mr. Thumble, "that he is inhibited,"—the bishop shook in his shoes,—"inhibited from the performance of any of his sacred duties." Thereupon, Mr. Thumble promised obedience and went his way.

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